

March 29, 2007

Dear Friend:

Last Friday at least sixteen tornados touched down with tremendous force in the eastern region of our state, causing major destruction. Curry, Roosevelt and Quay counties each were affected, with the communities of Clovis and Logan taking the hardest hits. Damage from the string of tornadoes has taken quite a toll on many Eastside families -- destroying homes, ravaging businesses, injuring many and most sadly, claiming one life.

I traveled to the Eastside on Monday and Tuesday of this week to survey the damage first hand, and to prepare for the rebuilding process.

Together with state, county and local officials, as well as the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), I participated in the initial phase of damage assessment. This preliminary damage assessment is necessary to determine if these areas qualify for Federal Aid. After being on the ground, and surveying the damage first hand, I believe we have a strong case for securing the aid.

Additionally, I returned to Washington late Tuesday night and met with National FEMA Director David Paulison yesterday morning. Together with Governor Richardson and Senators Bingaman and Domenici, we explained the magnitude of the situation and made clear our determination to obtain federal funding to help rebuild the Eastside.

Director Paulison was very sympathetic to the situation and receptive of our message. It is our goal that once FEMA receives the request for disaster assistance from the Governor, Director Paulison will quickly approve the necessary funds to help rehabilitate this region of the state.

In the coming days and weeks, I will continue to do everything possible to emphasize to FEMA and other federal agencies like the Departments of Agriculture and Housing and Urban Development, and the Small Business Administration, the urgent need for federal funds to start flowing our way so we can begin moving forward and rebuilding.

Although it was very difficult to see the hardships families and businesses on the Eastside now face, I came back to Washington this week with a sense of pride for the collective spirit that exists in our affected communities. Once again, in the face of adversity, the citizens on the Eastside have bonded together with optimism and a strong will to move forward. I speak for all New Mexicans when I say we stand by them 100 percent on their road to recovery. It was also gratifying to witness the stellar work done by our state, county and local officials on the ground. It was obvious by their efforts, that we all share the common goal of getting everyone in these neighborhoods back on their feet.

If you would like to know what you can do to help, please visit my website at www.tomudall.house.gov. There you'll find a list of places to send donations in the form

of financial assistance, blood donation and volunteer services. Together we can help the families of Eastern, NM.

Very Truly Yours,

Tom Udall
Member of Congress
Very Truly Yours,